

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 1943

06/01/1943 Ottawa Citizen Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

Calumet Rail Official Saved Tie-up in Storm
Bucks Through Blizzard Nine Miles to Vankleek Hill With Orders for Train Crews

MONTREAL, Jan. 5 (Special) A Canadian Pacific Railway agent in the small town of Calumet, on the north shore of the Ottawa river, saved a complete tie-up of holiday traffic on New Year's Eve when he won a race against time and last Thursday's blizzard, it has been revealed by Canadian Pacific officials.

The agent, E. Bergeron, went nine miles from Calumet to Vankleek Hill through the worst of the storm to deliver vital orders to train crews eastbound from Ottawa to Montreal, thus providing the key to start the unravelling of what at one time promised to develop into a major tie-up, with all trains inbound to Montreal unreported and all outbound trains being held at Montreal as a safety measure.

Bergeron's dramatic dash took place while thousands waited in railway stations and railwaymen, waging a tremendous fight to keep lines open against the relentless enemies of snow, sleet and gale, were running up against a complete blackout of communications between here and the national capital.

There was no answer from any of the lines resourceful transportation experts tried, and then C. G. Nuttall, transportation assistant to R.W. Scott, general superintendent of the Quebec district, got Calumet. By a whim of the storm god that north shore line was still functioning. Not for long it's true, but long enough for Mr. Nuttall, who once was a train dispatcher, to dictate orders to Agent Bergeron and charge him with getting them through.

The blizzard was at its height when the agent started his nine-mile race against time. The roads were blocked, but he got through, bucking them first in a truck, then in a sleigh and finally winding up on foot.

He got to Vankleek Hill ahead of the first eastbound train, to the conductor of which he delivered the orders. The rest of it was easier then. The eastbound trains were brought in, while westbound traffic was resumed with safety.

The first train to go west was in four sections, first one of which was a snow plow. That, too, resulted from information going back to the Bergeron dash through the storm, for the first report which the superintendent's office had on the "blacked out" sections of the line came from the first eastbound train to arrive.

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06/01/1943 Ottawa Journal Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

C.P.R. Agent Prevents Tie-up By Wild Race Against Time
Travels From Calumet to Vankleek Hill With Orders for Holiday Traffic

MONTREAL, Jan. 5. A Canadian Pacific Railway agent in the small town of Calumet, on the north shore of the Ottawa river saved a complete tie-up of holiday traffic on New Year's Eve when he won a race against time and last Thursday's blizzard, it was revealed by Canadian Pacific officials. The agent E. Bergeron, went nine miles from, Calumet to Vankleek Hill through the worst of the storm to deliver vital orders to train crews eastbound from Ottawa to Montreal, thus providing the key to start the unravelling of what at one time, promised to develop into a major tie-up, with all trains inbound to Montreal unreported and all outbound trains being held at Montreal as a safety measure.

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The whole storm period saw the maintenance of service made possible by the co-peration of all, from laborers to senior officials. Operation officials were on the job all New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Outside workers kept going under the worst possible conditions, for the sleet which snapped telegraph wires also sheathed these men in ice and they stopped only long enough to remove the armor of ice from their overalls before going back.

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07/01/1943 Kingston Whig Standard Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

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07/01/1943 The Standard Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

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07/01/1943 Niagara Falls Review Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

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07/01/1943 Hamilton Spectator Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

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07/01/1943 Owen Sound Sun Times Montreal and Ottawa Vankleek Hill

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Station Agent's Nine-mile Dash In Blizzard Breaks Railway Jam

In a nine-mile dash across the frozen Ottawa River from Calumet, Que., to Vankleek Hill, Qnt. a small-town, railroad agent carried orders to break the key train in the New Year's Eve stormbound railway traffic jam and allowed thousands of armed forces members and the general public to reach their destinations, the Canadian Pacific Railway reported yesterday.

In the face of a complete blackout in railway communications, the railroad officials say the trains en route between Montreal and the national capital were unreported and trains bound out of both terminals were held back awaiting reports.

Through fortuitous circumstances the station agent at Calumet, E. Bergeron, was reached by the despatch office and he undertook the nine-mile trek through the blizzard to deliver the orders which would release the train held at Vankleek Hill. The details of the dramatic dash made by the station agent are not yet fully known but his successful effort allowed thousands stranded on stalled trains and in terminals and way stations to reach their destinations, albeit some hours late.

By his action, Bergeron won a race against time and averted a complete tie-up in the already strained transportation crisis between the metropolis and Ottawa, railroad officials said.

With trains "dead" on the rails, none of the communications the transportation experts tried functioned despite great efforts to keep the "lines" open. It fell to C. G. Nuttall, transportation assistant to R. W. Scott, general superintendent of the Quebec District, to win a smile from fate.

In the relentless fury of snow and sleet lashed by a gale, the gods of the storm played pranks and left a single line open to Calumet, Que.

"Not for long," say the railway officials., "but long enough to allow Nuttall, who was once a train despatcher, to dictate orders to Bergeron and to charge him with getting them through."

The blizzard was at its height when the agent started his nine-mile dash against time. The roads were blocked but Bergeron managed to make part of the journey in a truck and another part of the journey was completed in a sleigh. After crossing the Ottawa river, the railroader continued his journey afoot.

"He reached Vankleek Hill ahead of the first eastbound train," the Canadian Pacific Railway said. "He delivered the orders to the conductor. The 'key log' was broken in the traffic jam. The eastbound trains were brought in and the westbound traffic was resumed with safety."

08/01/1943 *Calgary Albertan* *Montreal and Ottawa* *Vankleek Hill*

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16/01/1943 *Railway Age* *Montreal and Ottawa* *Vankleek Hill*

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06/03/1943 *Ottawa Citizen* *New York Central* *Harrison's*

The train weary Commandos, forced to idle away ten hours on the 70-mile [sic] journey from Cornwall, arrived home shortly after six o'clock yesterday evening and immediately set about getting some rest in preparation for the fourth game of their playoff series with Lex Cook's club at the auditorium tonight.

Alex Smith and his club left the Factory Town in the early hours of the morning but spent a long day on the train when snow drifts held the party at Harrison's station, some nine miles from Cornwall, for five hours.

23/03/1943 *Ottawa Citizen* *Maniwaki*

Maniwaki train may run to suit civil servants

The summer schedule of the C.P.R. service to Maniwaki will probably be arranged to accommodate the civil servants with summer homes in the Gatineau district, it was learned this morning, but nothing definite can be done in the matter until the "staggered hours" system is put on a definite basis.

An official in the office of the director of operations, Board of Transport Commissioners, told The Citizen that the schedule of the Gatineau line was more or less "elastic" and could be arranged to be of greatest convenience to the passengers. "But there will have to be some definite decision and arrangement of the Civil Service working hours before a schedule suitable to all can be decided upon," he said.

A. Leo Sauve, assistant general passenger agent of the C.P.R. here, declared that the Gatineau service could be arranged to accommodate the majority of passengers if such an arrangement was agreeable to other train schedules using the single track between the Union Station and Hull.

"Beyond that," said Mr. Sauve, "the line schedule can be re-arranged at will, but we have to consider the trains using that track."

Mr. Sauve said that T.R. Montgomery, president of the Civil Service Association of Ottawa, had not called him to arrange for a meeting or discussion on the subject of the Gatineau train service. The passenger agent added that he would welcome all opinions, and had received some by telephone this morning.

So at noon today the matter remained unchanged, the summer schedule of the Maniwaki train calling for it to leave Ottawa at 5.20 p.m., and return at 8.40 a.m., both arrival and leaving times considered useless to civil servants under the present staggered hours plan.

12/05/1943 *Ottawa Citizen* *Maniwaki*

Upper Gatineau objects to new C.P.R. schedule

Strong protest over the new schedule of the C.P.R. line between Ottawa and Maniwaki was voiced by the Maniwaki and Gracefield delegations at the convention of the Union of Chambers of Commerce of Western Quebec in Hull yesterday.

Acting as spokesman for the Chambers of Commerce of the two villages, Palma Joanis of Maniwaki said the new schedule was absolutely unfair to the residents of the Upper Gatineau district. It was all very well to try and please Ottawa civil servants who go up to their summer cottages but some consideration should be given to the permanent residents, he said.

"As it is now the morning train leaves Maniwaki at 5 a.m. and the night train comes in at 9.30 p.m. Those who want to take the morning train have practically to spend a sleepless night and in the evening they have to do without their mail and daily newspapers because the distribution is only made by the post office the following day."

A motion was passed protesting over the inconvenience caused to the residents of the affected districts and urging that some adjustments be made to alleviate the hardships imposed upon a large number of residents of the Upper Gatineau district.

28/05/1943 *Ottawa Citizen* *Chalk River* *Almonte*

Materials reach Almonte for new railway signals.

Almonte May 27. Work in the new station protection railway signal system for Almonte, which was recommended during the inquest following the disastrous wreck there on December 27 last, will get under way soon.

Materials for the construction of the system, which is very complicated and will probably take several months to install, have arrived here.

The signal is a hooded light which warns an approaching train if another one is standing at the next block. In this case the signal light will be installed around the sharp curve west of Almonte and will give an approaching train plenty of time to stop if another one is standing at the station.

It was brought out at the inquest into the wreck that if a station protection signal such as will now be installed had been in commission beyond the western curve, the chances of an accident would have been practically non-existent. It is said that five miles of electric wire will be needed to make the installation.

A signal light similar to the one being placed in service at Almonte is already in operation outside Carleton Place.

29/06/1943 Ottawa Journal Maniwaki Marks Station

Train service to Maniwaki on the Canadian Pacific line, blocked yesterday after the derailment of an engine tender at Marks Station, 33 miles north of Ottawa, has been resumed

29/06/1943 Ottawa Journal Alexandria Limoges

Normal Rail Traffic Resumed on Main Line to Montreal

After a night and a day of intense effort to repair Canadian Pacific and Canadian National railway lines in the Ottawa district, damaged by Sunday night's rain storm, officials of both systems told The Journal last night that normal flow of traffic had been resumed.

Filling in of the washout of the Canadian National Railways' main line to Montreal at Limoges, 23 miles east of Ottawa, which caused, a derailment of a freight train yesterday morning and resulted in a tie-up of the line, was completed last night at nine o'clock when the track was reopened.

The heavy rains yesterday caused fears as the C.N.R. train from Montreal, due in the city at 10.45 p.m., failed to arrive for nearly an hour.

However, the delay was the result of a hold-up in leaving Montreal and not due to weather conditions.

26/08/1943 Ottawa Citizen Alexandria Deep Cut

Mr. Roosevelt left Ottawa last night as unobtrusively as he arrived at 11 25 in the morning. After brief respite at Laurier House, home of Prime Minister Mackenzie King where the two "old friends" chatted over an evening meal. F D R. left for the Nicholas street siding, where he boarded a special train.

21/10/1943 Ottawa Citizen Winchester Chesterville

Mrs. T. Cowan Killed By Train at Chesterville

Mrs. Thomas Cowan, wife of the station agent at Chesterville. was killed early this morning when she was hit by a west bound freight train a few yards from her home.

In illhealth for some time. Mrs. Cowan was in her late fifties. She came to Chesterville two years ago when her husband was appointed station agent. They have no children.

Coroner Thomas Hamilton of Brinston was called and Constable Garrett McLean is investigating. It has not been decided whether or not there will be an inquest. Funeral arrangements have not been completed.

18/11/1943 Ottawa Citizen Renfrew

Discontinuance of the C.N.R. line between Arnprior and Eganville will be opposed by the towns, villages and townships affected by the plan. A plan to oppose the scheme was approved at a meeting of mayors and reeves of the municipalities concerned held last week in Renfrew.

It would not have seemed strange had the application to discontinue the line come a few years ago. Motor trucks and cars were on the road to a much greater extent than they are now and they all took away the traffic the railways were prepared to carry. several branch railway lines in the province have been closed but in all such proceedings the chief argument backing the application was that trucks were robbing the railway of the business of transporting freight. Conditions have changed, however. *Almonte Gazette*

28/12/1943 Ottawa Citizen Montreal and Ottawa Rigaud

Think Man Killed Was Osvald Stein Official of I.L.O.

MONTREAL. Dec. 28. (CP.) A man believed to be Osvald Stein, assistant director of the International Labor office here, was killed near Rigaud, Que., 40 miles west of here, today, apparently in a fall from a Canadian Pacific Railways Ottawa-Montreal train.

Railway officials identified the man as Osvald Stein, but said they had no indication as to whether he had been connected with the I.L.O. An I.L.O. spokesman said however, that "we are practically certain he is our Mr. Stein," and the I.L.O. sent staff members to Rigaud immediately to see if the body could be identified.

Had Been in Ottawa.

Description of the man killed as supplied by the C.P.R. tallied closely with that of Mr. Stein, a heavy six-foot man of about 55 years of age. The I.L.O. added that he had planned to take the train on which the man was killed.

The dead man was found on the railway right-of-way about 140 feet west of the station platform at Rigaud. Railway officials expressed belief he had opened a coach door himself ready to descend as the train came into the station, and had slipped under the wheels.

Czecho-Slovak Citizen.

Mr. Stein, a Czecho-Slovak citizen, has been associated with the I.L.O. for 21 years, and has been assistant director since 1942. Prior to last year he was chief of the Social Security section of the international office, and during his 21 years with the I.L.O. has been mostly closely linked with social security work.

In 1942 he went to England to testify before the Beveridge committee, and in his social security report Sir William Beveridge paid tribute to the assistance given by the I.L.O. through Mr. Stein. His most closely linked with social months ago when he went to Venezuela to help the government draft legislation to implement a social security law.

On his way back to Montreal, he testified before various sections of the United Nations rehabilitation and relief conferences at Atlantic City.

31/12/1943 Cornwall Freeholder Alexandria

STEAM KILLS RAIL ENGINEER AT ALEXANDRIA

(Ottawa) Two railroaders, A. Valliere, 30, of Limoges, Que., and M.S. Cybulski, 30, of Barry's Bay, Ont., were in hospital here today in "quite serious condition" following the burst of a steam pipe in a Canadian National Railways freight engine near Alexandria, Ont. which fatally injured T.C. Reasbeck, 54, of Ottawa, the engineer.

Cybulski, fireman, and Valliere, brakeman, suffered scalds to the hands, face and ankles when the pipe exploded and Cybulski also suffered a deep scalp wound.

Live steam shot into the cab of the locomotive as the train was pulling 55 cars up a grade near Alexandria, about 55 miles east of Ottawa.

Reasbeck was thrown through the cab window by the explosion.

Jumped From Cab

Cybulski is believed to have jumped from the engine cab. The train, which continued to roll forward after the explosion, finally was stopped about three quarters of a mile east of the point where Reasbeck was found.

Conductor Ross Conley of Ottawa and other crewmen put out flares to stop the fast C.N.R. Transcontinental No. 1 train from Montreal which was following the freight. The Transcontinental was halted at Alexandria however and later pushed the freight into Greenfield, Ont. and took the injured men aboard.

Two Alexandria doctors, E.J. Dolan and D. Primeau, boarded the Transcontinental train here and went to the scene where they were assisted in treating the injured by Miss Edna Hill of Apple Hill, Ont., a trained nurse.

Engineer T.C. Reasbeck, 54, of 128, Hawthorne avenue, was killed late last night when a steam pipe burst on the locomotive of an eastbound freight train en route from Ottawa to Montreal at a point between Greenfield and Alexandria, about 50 miles east of Ottawa.

Injured seriously in the mishap were Fireman M.S. Cybulski, 30, of Barrys Bay and Brakeman A. Valliere, 30, of Limoges, who were taken to the Ottawa Civic Hospital on arrival of the Trans-Continental train from Halifax to Vancouver.

The explosion did not cause derailment of the freight train, but delayed the Trans-Continental about two hours and 20 minutes on reaching the Capital.

Injuries to Fireman Cybulski and Brakeman Valliere consisted of burns and severe scalds, and early this morning the hospital reported their condition quite serious.

Cause of the explosion is under investigation, according to a statement issued by Superintendent Paul Fox of the Ottawa C.N.R. division.

It was learned that Engineer Reasbeck died of a fractured skull suffered when he was hurled out of the engine cab following the explosion.

Fireman Cybulski jumped and Brakeman Valliere remained in the cab and was the least injured. The brakeman suffered scalds to the hands, face and ankles while the fireman was also badly scalded on the face, hands and ankles and, in addition, suffered a deep scalp wound.

The freight train had travelled its entire length past the point where Engineer Reasbeck was found lying beside the track. It took a searching party some time to find the unconscious man.

Dr. D.J. Dolan of Alexandria, where the injured were taken first, treated them until they were put aboard the Trans-Continental for Ottawa. The injured were met by the ambulance of George H. Rogers Ltd., which took them to the Civic Hospital.

Superintendent Fox stated there had been no boiler explosion. If there had been the roadbed of the track would have been torn up.

On arrival of the injured men in Ottawa, Dr. R. Lorne gardmer, C.N.R. physician took charge. An inquest will be held, but Dr. Dolan said he would have to communicate with the Crown Attorney Harkness in Cornwall to learn who would officiate at it.

The Trans-Continental train which was delayed two hours and 20 minutes should have arrived at 10.45 p.m.